



THE PARADISE FLATS

The Janitor Has More Talk With the Grocer

"I believe maybe you was on some vacation," said the German grocer as the janitor of Paradise Flats showed up the other day for the first time in weeks. "No, I have had no vacation, and I don't expect any," was the reply. "You see, I am a janitor with the asthma, and if my asthma would permit me to take a vacation it would permit me to wash the windows and sweep the halls. I've got to be consistent about things, you know. I shall take my vacation in an armchair in the basement, and I shall take due care that none of the tenants forget what a fragile physique I've got. You know what physique is, don't you, Mr. Wasserman?"

"He was something to do with shump-around, maybe?"

"Yes, that's it, and I don't purpose to jump around. In the first place, a janitor should move with dignity when he moves at all, and in the next it's beneath his position to wrangle about goats, dogs, and children in the halls. It also gives chic to a flat to have a janitor around who doesn't sweat his collar on a hot day. I think I know my gait, Mr. Wasserman—I think I know it exactly."

"Well, how was all done bad people?" asked the grocer after an admiring glance at the janitor.

"Just the same—no better, no worse. They are still trying to out-do each other, and that keeps things lively around the house."

"And does some one pull hair?"

"Not exactly, but what did those swaggers do when they found them?"

"Just turned right in the doorway and the whole lot just to save the feelings of the hostess. Yes, sir, the melons were cut up and passed around, and everybody ate and snatched his lips and said he had never tasted anything so good. It took them an hour to down those melons, but they left nothing but the rinds. If they had been stuffed with cotton, it would have been the same. Well, society never makes any blunders, Mr. Wasserman."

"But one time I eat a green watermelon and had colic."

"That's another point, Mr. Wasserman—the greatest point of all," said the janitor in a whisper.

"Don't you give the thing away for love or money, but I'm telling you that every one of those forty guests had colic to beat the band before the last melon was down. They grew pale and twitched and shuddered and giggled around, but not one of them let out a hint of what was the matter. Swaggers never give away their secrets, not even when it has the colic."

"And did they suffer?"

"You bet they did. Some of them were almost tied up in knots with the pain, but they laughed and smiled most of the time. The party broke up early, but no body mentioned colic. They had all sorts of excuses, and some of them were doubled up as they went out, but were gone to the last. They went out saying what an enjoyable time they had had and what a luscious thing a watermelon is, and neither the barber's wife or the Countess Divito followed with a banana festival. Both were successful, and Mrs. O'Sullivan was feeling cast down when I gave her a hint. Let me tell you, Mr. Wasserman, that a watermelon party is considered the swaggiest thing on the board for the summer. It's the real chic. You have got to get at least six big watermelons and pour a bottle of claret into each and have the fruit frozen. Then you eat it with a silver spoon and wipe your mouth off with a red-bordered table napkin. I gave Mrs. O'Sullivan all the necessary pointers, and the affair was a tremendous success all around."

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POOR BOWSER GETS HIS

Mrs. Bowser In a Diplomatic Way Attends to His Case

Mr. Bowser's grouch started at 3 o'clock in the afternoon when he found that a certain man had done him up for five minutes. He carried that grouch to the car with him. It rode with him and got off with him. It was bubbling when he kicked the darned old gate open.



OR PUT ON YOUR HAT AND

It took to wrath when he found a darned needle on the lower step. Mrs. Bowser was in the hall when he entered the house, but he got out of his overcoat, club and slippers. Why didn't you notice her? Like a diplomatic woman, she took no notice of his conduct, and though he growled and rumbled over the dinner, she prevented his breaking loose. When the meal was finished, however, Mr. Bowser held in no longer. He stood in the middle of the sitting room and looked around for an excuse to begin the business of the evening. It took him three or four minutes to find one, but he finally broke out with a snarl: "You've been at it again, have you?"

"At what?" she quietly asked.

"At smashing up the furniture with your club. I don't know what you're doing, but the windows are broken, the door knobs all off, but you must keep at it. What's left? Look at that chair, will you?"

"I see the chair. One of the casters is out."

"And how did it come out?" she shouted.

"You probably spent half the afternoon whacking away at the chair with your club. I don't know what you're doing, but the windows are broken, the door knobs all off, but you must keep at it. What's left? Look at that chair, will you?"

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try, and one of her rights is to talk. You didn't seem to like the steak at dinner, and I noticed you making up a face over your coffee. It was a fine steak, Mr. Bowser, and the coffee was excellent. However, if you can do better, I'll have no objections. Perhaps it would be as well for you to secure board elsewhere for a week or two."

Mr. Bowser sat down. He sat down because his head whirled and he was wondering where he was at.

"You complain about things being broken except by you. You go slapping around like a rhinoceros turned loose, and it's a wonder we have a whole piece of furniture in the house. If the door knobs were not on to stay you'd have slammed them off long ago. You broke four glasses in trying to get one off the buffet the other night, and this morning you managed to pull two handles off your dresser and drag one of the windows down. Now, if you're going to be as talkative as my using needle-hammers and crowbars!"

She heaved a gasping sound from the direction of Mr. Bowser, and glanced that way to note his feelings.

"The other night we had a little difference of opinion," she said, as she turned away. "Because I differed with you, you got up and tramped around the room and said it was no wonder that the door knobs were not on to stay. Why didn't you notice her? Like a diplomatic woman, she took no notice of his conduct, and though he growled and rumbled over the dinner, she prevented his breaking loose. When the meal was finished, however, Mr. Bowser held in no longer. He stood in the middle of the sitting room and looked around for an excuse to begin the business of the evening. It took him three or four minutes to find one, but he finally broke out with a snarl: 'You've been at it again, have you?'"

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